



NEWSLETTER

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Azerbaijan Marks 90th Anniversary of First Parliament

On June 19 Milli Mejlis (Parliament) of Azerbaijan marked the 90th anniversary since its establishment in 1918, when it became the first elected parliament in the Muslim world. About 40 delegations from parliaments around the world took part in a solemn ceremony held in Baky.

Canadian Parliamentarian Delegation Visits Azerbaijan

Members of Canada-Azerbaijan Interparliamentary Friendship Group led by Senator David Smith visited Azerbaijan on June 17-21. The delegation participated in the ceremony of the celebration of the 90th anniversary of the establishment of first parliament in Azerbaijan. Canadian MPs also held bilateral meetings – with the Speaker of Azerbaijani Parliament, the Minister of Foreign Affairs, the Minister of Economic Development and other officials. Canada-Azerbaijan Interparliamentary Friendship Group was established in Canadian parliament first time in November 2006. Similar group functions in the Azerbaijani Parliament.

Women Leaders Gather in Baky

On June 10-11, the Heydar Aliyev Foundation jointly with the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) and the Islamic Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (ISESCO) hosted the first international forum on expanding the role of women in cross-cultural dialogue in Baku. This effort was led by Azerbaijan's First Lady Mehriban Aliyeva, who concurrently serves as the President of the Heydar Aliyev Foundation as well as Goodwill Ambassador for both UNESCO and ISESCO. The forum brought together over 300 distinguished participants, including first ladies of Angola, Latvia,

Poland, South Africa and the State of Texas as well as wives of Turkey's Prime Minister, Argentina's Vice-President and other prominent guests. Speaking at the event, Ms. Aliyeva said that greater participation of women in political life can help to bridge cultural, social and economic divides. She also highlighted Azerbaijan's experience of granting equal voting rights to both men and women already in 1918. The forum concluded by adopting the Statement of the First Ladies and the Baku Declaration. The declaration called for women to be more involved in preserving universal human values and in promoting cross-cultural dialogue. More information is available at www.bakuforum.az

WB Approves \$164 mln for Oil Cleanup

The World Bank (WB) on Tuesday approved three projects worth \$164 million to clean up Azerbaijan's Absheron Peninsula, polluted by years of onshore oil production. Decades of industrial operations have left about 30,000 hectares of land in the peninsula polluted by oil products and industrial waste material, the WB said. The area is one of the oldest oil-producing regions in the world. "These three projects are a part of a historical effort Azerbaijan is undertaking to improve the ecological situation of the Absheron Peninsula, and particularly to bring ecological conditions in Baky to European standards," Gregory Jedrzejczak, the WB's country manager for Azerbaijan, said. The project includes three components: Contaminated Sites Rehabilitation Project will clean-up two former iodine production sites; Large Scale Oil Polluted Land Clean-up Project will help the State Oil Company of Azerbaijan to carry out a large-scale cleanup; and Integrated Solid Waste Management Project will help to develop capacity building.